

Remarks:

This amendment is submitted in an earnest effort to advance this case to issue without delay. The examiner has indicated that the case contains allowable subject matter.

Claim 1 has been amended to overcome the §112 rejection.

For the record, amended claim 1 reads on the illustrated embodiment of the invention as shown in the drawing as follows:

A method of cutting a piece 1' off an elongated web 1 and transporting the cut-off piece 1' transversely from the web 1 using an apparatus comprising:

a gripper 4 closable on the web 1 and displaceable longitudinally of the web 1 along a longitudinal path between an advanced position (FIGS. 1, 3, and 4) close to a stationary supply 14 of the web 1 and a retracted position (FIG. 2) spaced longitudinally from the supply 14;

upper and lower downstream clamp parts 10 and 11 extending transversely across and vertically flanking the path; and

upper and lower longitudinally generally nondisplaceable upstream clamp parts 7 and 8 extending transversely across and vertically flanking the path

between the downstream clamp parts 10 and 11 and the supply 14;

the method comprising the steps of sequentially;

a) with the upper clamp parts 7 and 10 spaced vertically from the lower clamp parts 8 and 11, displacing the gripper 4 upstream in a longitudinal direction 2 toward the supply 14 between the clamp parts 7, 8, 10, and 11, closing the gripper 4 on the web 1, and pulling the web 1 downstream along the path between the clamp parts 7, 8, 10, and 11 so that a length of the web 1 extends downstream along the path from the supply 14 between the clamp parts 7, 8, 10, and 11, and closing the upstream clamp parts 7 and 8 on the web 1 to clamp it;

b) transversely through cutting the web 1 between the supply 14 and the upstream clamp parts 7 and 8 to create a separate downstream piece 1' held between the gripper 4 and the upstream clamp parts 7 and 8;

c) displacing the gripper 4 while still closed on the piece 1' back upstream such that the piece 1' forms a dependent loop between the gripper 4 and the upstream clamp parts 7 and 8 until the gripper 4 is immediately downstream of the downstream clamp parts 10 and 11 and displacing the lower downstream clamp part simultaneously upward and upstream toward the upper downstream clamp part to clamp the web 1 between the upper and lower downstream clamp parts 7, 8, 10, and 11

when the gripper 4 is immediately downstream of the downstream clamp parts 10 and 11;

d) releasing the web 1 from the gripper 4; and

e) transporting the piece 1' as a dependent loop horizontally transversely of the direction 2 with the clamp parts 7, 8, 10, and 11 without significantly longitudinally displacing the clamp parts 7, 8, 10, and 11.

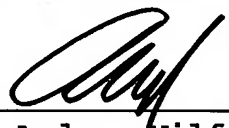
Since there is no art rejection and the formal §112 rejection has been overcome, the application is in condition for allowance and passage to issue.

For the record, the parallel PCT case has been allowed. The only references cited against it that have not already been dealt with in detail are the applicant's own earlier PCT applications whose US equivalents are US patent 6,230,596 and 6,601,489. A PTO1449 listing these two references is enclosed herewith.

If only minor problems that could be corrected by means of a telephone conference stand in the way of allowance of this

case, the examiner is invited to call the undersigned to make the necessary corrections.

Respectfully submitted,  
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